

The Oath

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The Oath

by [PJKTiny](#)

Summary

Dr Robby finally gets home from The Pitt after having been on his feet for twelve straight hours. All he wants is to shovel down some dinner and crawl into bed... That is until a phone call interrupts him and changes his evening's trajectory entirely.

Notes

Thanks for stopping by!

Forewarning - there is a discussion of suicide/thoughts of wanting to end your life, as well as self-harming. Please don't proceed if this is going to make you feel rubbish.

This is small little thing I came up with from a one off line that ran away from me.

I've not given it too much thought, but I hope it is enjoyable to read nonetheless. I just needed to release the brain worm (like an ear worm, but much less musical).

See the end of the work for [more notes](#)

Dr Robinavitch had never before felt so relieved to take his shoes off. Coming off the back of a twelve hour shift, it was always one of the best parts of his day. But this shift in particular, he'd sat down for a grand total of maybe fifteen minutes, twenty five if he was being generous. His poor left knee was screaming at him, that was without mentioning his back. The groan he let out had more feeling behind it than all of his last orgasms at that moment.

...And then his phone rang. And all the promise of 4, maybe 5 hours of sleep, was being threatened. Whoever it was, Robby was about ready to hunt down and eviscerate whoever was on the other end of the line.

"Look! I don't care who this is, but I've just come off the back of being on my feet for a solid twelve hours. So, and I say this with all of the love and respect possible, please fuck off and call me back tomorrow morning!" He snapped down the line.

"Robby?" the other voice croaked down the line, hoarse and unsure.

Robby froze where he stood, glass of water half way to his lips, phone half way down to the counter. Moving in slow motion, he pulled his cell phone back to his ear. Internally, the only thing going through his mind 'Oh this isn't good' over and over.

"Hey man. You okay?"

"I'm sorry for calling, I know you, uh, you just got off a long shift."

"Honestly, it's no problem. So, wh- what's going on?" he asked hesitantly, not wanting to push whatever the issue may be.

"C-can you come over?" the same shaky voice asked.

By this point, Robby's glass had been set down, his keys and wallet grabbed from the bowl by the door and he'd sat down to pull his shoes on again.

"I'm already on my way, Jack. I'll be twenty five minutes. Can you stay on the phone with me?" He asked, heart still racing and not knowing why Jack was calling.

"Mhm," Jack replied.

Robby knew he'd been struggling. *Just a rough patch* Jack had called it. Knowing the degree to which Jack understates things, said *rough patch* could mean he needs an extra set of hands to change a light bulb, he's fallen and can't get up, could be he's teetering on the edge of some building, or it could be that he's critically injured, hit by a car and literally moments away from dying.

"So," Robby tried again hesitantly. "What's goin' on Jack?" Meanwhile thinking about how many times over the years they'd shared this exact conversation.

"I, erm, I. Don't think I should, erm," Jack cleared his throat. "I don't think I should be alone right now."

Robby sighed, making sure the speaker was nowhere near his mouth. His internal repetition of 'Oh this isn't good', had switched up to a 'this is really fuckin' bad'.

"I'm here, man. Always - for whatever, okay?"

"I, um. I know. It's bad, Robby," Jack admitted. "Really fucking bad."

"Talk to me, Jack. Please"

Abbott sighed heavily. "When you get here. Can you just, I dunno. Talk to me about your day or somethin' man, anything."

The rest of the, thankfully short, journey over to Jack's apartment was filled with a one sided recounting of how the day shift went. Nothing too detailed, Robby only had twenty minutes after all. Just a general overview and a little more information on a particularly interesting head injury. The head injury even got a grunt of acknowledgement from Abbott.

"Alright brother, I'm just pulling up outside. Is your door open?"

"No, gimme a sec"

"No need man, I still got your spare. That okay?"

"Mhm," Jack relented.

"See you in a second Jack. I'm going to hang up now okay"

“Mhm”

If Robby moved as quickly from his car to Jack’s door as he did when major traumas came through the Pitt doors, no one was around to see. Even though he was unlocking the door, Robby still knocked before entering. The more warning Jack had that someone was coming into his space, in whatever state he could be in, the better.

“Jack? It’s just me,” he warned as he got into the house. “Where are you man?”

At not getting a response, seeing all the lights in the apartment, except for a thin beam from the bedroom.

“You in your room, Jack?” Robby called, toeing off his shoes.

He still heard nothing from the other man, and now Robby was genuinely concerned about what he was going to walk into.

“Jack?” he called again, getting to the bedroom but now seeing that the light was coming from the bathroom.

“So, what’re we doin’ in here man?” Robby asked, looking around the small space for any clues.

Jack shuffled where he was perched, fully dressed, on his shower chair. He moved for the back of his waistband.

Abbott cleared his throat. “I think I need you to get this outta here for a while”

Robby’s heart almost stopped. Jack had his handgun held out, offering it up to Robby as he stared holes in the tile of the bathroom floor.

Robby nodded and kept his voice even. “I think that’s probably a good idea”

“I was gonna use it,” Jack sighed heavily. “I,” he huffed out a long breath. “I wanted to use it, Mikey.”

Dr Robby raked his eyes over Jack’s body, doctor mode taking over to check for anything else Jack may have done. He thought everything

was clear, but then his eyes fixed onto the stuck fabric on Jack's thigh.

"Did you wanna do anything else, Jack?" he asked carefully, knowing how much of a knife edge his best friend was on.

This time, Jack glanced up to Robby. His eyes red rimmed, with dark circles beneath them and looking zoned out.

Abbott, still staring at the floor, pointed blindly to his sink. "You should probably take that too"

Following Jack's arm, Robby saw the pack of razors by the tap.

"You've got me pretty worried here man," Robby admitted. "Are you telling me what I think you're telling me?"

Abbot sighed, nodding. "Yeah. I think I am, I'm sorry man." Robby shook his head, "no apologising brother. You called me. You could have gone ahead with whatever you wanted to do. But instead, you called me, Jack. You called me for help. So I know we're gonna get through this"

"Don't lock me up in the psych ward man," Jack asked, more vulnerable than Robby remembers hearing in a long time.

"Have you hurt yourself Jack?" Robby blurted out.

"It's fine"

"You mind if I be the judge of that?"

"I don't care what happens to it, leave it"

"I care what happens to you, Jack. Please let me take a look"

Jack puffed his chest, hackles up, getting defensive. "It doesn't need lookin' at"

"Okay. Can we maybe get out of the bathroom then?" Robby asked, trying to make his tone light again.

"Sure," Jack agreed, holding the bar of his chair to push himself up.

"Where're your crutches?"

“I didn’t really plan to come outta here when I came in. They’re by my bed”

Robby helped the shorter man up, supporting him to his bed. The few steps passed in a tense silence, neither man knowing really how to broach the enormity of what was going on. With Jack safely lowered down, Robby sat next to him.

“I’m not going anywhere, man,” Robby said softly, carefully placing his hand over the suspect patch on Jack’s right thigh. Jack’s wince confirmed Robby’s suspicions, or maybe not confirmed, but just knew that he’d done something.

The two men sat in silence for a few minutes. It was only broken by Robby hearing strained breaths from beside him. Robby looked to his left and saw a sight he’d never seen previously. Jack was crying. In their line of work, both men had seen the worst, most heart-wrenching sights almost everyday. But, his best friend crying, having just called asking to take away his hand gun, telling him he wanted to use it, was the worst thing Michael Robinavitch had probably ever seen. And it hurt Robby so badly, knowing there was nothing he could say at this moment to offer comfort to Jack. He could offer up all the platitudes and reassurances in the book. But it would mean nothing. It didn’t matter how much Robby actually meant them. This was a deep, dark hole Jack was in. And all Robby could do was stand, slightly further up, dangle down a rope and pray to a God he wasn’t sure he believed in, that Jack would grab on.

Without hesitation, Robby pulled Jack into his chest, holding him as tight as he could against his chest. All of Abbot’s resolve crumbled. The small, restrained cries turned into harsh tears, choking breaths and full body shakes. Against Robby’s chest, Abbott was mumbling. Barely understandable most of the time, but Robby could make out his pleas of, “I’m sorry, Robby,” and Robby’s heart breaking with every repetition.

After fifteen of the most agonising minutes Robby had experienced in years, Jack emerged from his hiding place in the taller man’s chest.

Jack looked up into Robby's deep, sad, brown eyes; his own swollen and red, and asked "Can you stay with me, Robby? Make sure I don't - you know..."

"Do something permanent?" Robby finished.

"That's one way of putting it," Jack replied. "Did you still wanna look at my leg? I think it, erm, probably needs some attention"

Robby moved to stand up, his hand patting Jack's shoulder as he did. "Med kit still under the sink?"

"Which sink? One under the bathroom, and kitchen"

Rolling his eyes, Robby patted Jack on the shoulder again and headed to the bathroom. "Let me guess, there's trauma kits in every room too.

With a shuddering breath, Jack shook his head. "You know me too fuckin' well man"

It didn't take more than a moment for Robby to see the box of supplies. He hurried back to Jack's side, an irrational part of him afraid to leave him alone for even a few seconds. Robby set the box down on the end of the bed, and urged Jack to lie down.

"I don't know why I did it, Mike. I just," he huffed. "I don't know. I needed to hurt, take my mind off the shit storm in my head"

At that moment, Dr Robby's suspicions were confirmed. Jack had self-inflicted wounds on his right thigh. Michael Robinavitch realised that his friend was so deep underwater, there was no light reaching him anymore. Simultaneously having reinforced that there was nothing he wouldn't do to help Jack Abbot.

He got the packets of gauze from the kit. "Can you lift your hips up a sec so I can get your pants down"

"Whatever," Jack shrugged, shuffling his sweatpants down.

Robby's poker face came in handy, Jack's thigh was covered in several, fairly deep lacerations. Snapping on the gloves and opening the gauze Robby held it to the cuts that were still slowly bleeding.

"Half your drawers still empty?"

“What do you care?” Jack snapped

“I need to know where I can put my stuff”

Jack’s brow furrowed, face pulled tight in confusion and surprise.

“Why the fuck would you wanna do that?”

Robby laughed. “You’re kidding, right? You really don’t know why I’d want to stay here?”

Jack shook his head and shrugged. “I don’t know. I don’t know what I know any more, Mike”

Robby took off his gloves. He grabbed Jack’s head between his warm palms.

“Alright brother. Let me tell you all of what I know. I know that I’m not going anywhere. You’ve got me, Jack. Okay? I know how much you’ve been through, how much you have to fight through everyday. And still, you don’t give up alone. You called me. I’m here, you’re here, we’re gonna be okay. I mean this when I say this, Jack, you are the strongest person I know. It feels like there’s no end in sight right now,” he huffed.

“I should fuckin’ know, I’ve been there. You know how long I was there. But I’m still here, man. Against all the odds, all the times you talked me off the roof, all the times I called you at two in the morning, balling my eyes out, wanting everything to stop. Everything we’ve loved,” Robby’s voice broke.

“Everything we’ve lost... I’m still here, Jack. And I’m gonna fight like hell for you to make damn sure you stay here with me too”

“You gotta stop, man. You keep going like that, I’m gonna start crying and not be able to stop,” Jack admitted.

“Let it go, brother. There’s no pretending between us, right? Never has been,” Robby shrugged. “No matter how much we may have tried.”

Robby tilted Jack’s head up, making their eyes meet. A tension, almost like a static charge between them. “I’ve got you Jack. Let me take care of you for a while”

With Robby's permission, Jack crumpled. Any of the last dregs of fight that were running through him evaporated. Tears were streaming down his cheeks again, chest heaving with all of the internal chaos being expelled. And all the pain that came with that brought back all the unbearable sensations Jack had been trying to keep away for months now. Jack shook himself free from Robby's hold, scrambling back against the headboard, wrapping his arms tight around a pillow and muffled his sobs into the cushion. Robby didn't move, afraid of crowding Jack. He was operating almost as if his best friend, the closest thing he's ever had to a brother, was a wounded animal. He knew Jack was liable to flee at any moment. Still murmuring reassurances and gentle shushes, Robby tried making himself useful by inspecting the damage on the other man's thigh.

One of the cuts was particularly concerning. Robby didn't know when Jack had done it, but that one wound was still bleeding. He knew it should probably be stitched, but how was that going to happen with Jack as vulnerable as he was. Instead of tackling that issue head on, Robby applied some band-aids to the less severe cuts and pressed a new piece of gauze into the lowest of the cuts. It didn't escape Robby's attention that the worst of the cuts was the closest to where the shorter man's prosthetic would rest. 'That'd definitely hurt next time he gets his leg on', he noted internally.

Jack had no idea how much time had passed. From his shift ending last night, time had passed in a confusing, disorienting blur. He hadn't slept. Or maybe he had, he was too exhausted to tell. But the problem was, his thoughts just would not stop racing.

The final case he dealt with was a random act of violence. A man high on PCP on a rampage, stabbing a group of three men outside a Chinese takeout. When the three casualties arrived at the Pitt, and their clothes were sheared off, Jack almost froze. All three were wearing dog tags. All three having served in the same unit, a unit equal to that Jack had been in during his time in Afghanistan. 'Two of them were medics', he thought as he glanced at the rectangles of metal. He pushed it down. He had too, it was impossible to do his job and feel emotions for patients at the same time.

Jack got through it, as he always did. The world had lost another two veterans, and left another without his closest friends. Meanwhile, the assailant came away without a scratch, but not before managing to shove Dr Ellis hard into an instrument tray. ‘How many casualties is this guy trying to wrack up? Shoulda taken me out too, it’d be easier’ he thought.

The first thing Jack did when he got home was take off his prosthetic. His leg hadn’t hurt this bad in months, the new agony no doubt brought on because of his most recent case. Then Jack went straight to his bedroom, unlocked his gun safe and stared down the barrel of his glock for what could have been seconds or could have been hours. What was time at this point? Jack didn’t want to stick around to see any more of it pass.

Still in scrubs, Jack hobbled his way into the bathroom, having left his crutches by the bed. He pulled his pants down, grabbed a pack of razors from the cabinet, perched on his shower chair and started cutting. There was no thinking involved, no feeling. Just cutting.

All he wanted was his thoughts to stop. All he knew was the worst of humanity, day in and day out. With practiced hands, Jack was slicing at his thigh until the memories stopped. Until there was one thing left in his mind.

His thoughts were ringing with one thing. The same two words stuck circling over and over. Repeating and repeating, Jack only holds back because of those eight letters.

‘But Robby. But Robby. But Robby. But Robby’

He took out his phone and dialed.

“...You with me? Jack?”

Jack’s surroundings slowly came back into focus. Robby’s face was close, very close. He had a worried expression on his face and was

peering curiously into Jack's eyes. Upon noticing Jack was beginning to comprehend him again, Robby's face lit up.

"Hey brother," he said softly, a gleaming smile on his face. Jack looked dumbstruck.

"Shhh, you're okay," Robby murmured. "I think you dissociated for a little while there, but you're back with me now. You're here, I'm here, we're good, yeah?"

Jack shook his head. "I'm not okay, man"

With his voice breaking, Robby replied. "I know Jack. I know. But we're gonna get through this. I'll be here the whole time. We both have about two years of vacation time built up, what do you say we take some of it? God knows we need it"

"That sounds good," Jack nodded.

"Have you been sleeping?" Robby probed gently.

Jack couldn't even give the taller man a response.

"Well, I know it's like the opposite time to when you'd normally do it. But what do you say we both turn in for the night and then we call your therapist together in the morning?"

"The couch has a pull out mattress," Jack explained.

Shaking his head, Robby pulled Jack close into him. "When I said I wasn't going anywhere man, I meant that"

"You know..." Jack trailed off. "That's good, I really don't wanna be alone right now"

Robby shuffled both himself and Abbott until they were horizontal.

"When I said I wasn't leaving, Jack, I meant it"

"I don't deserve you, Michael Robinavitch"

"That's not even close to true. You deserve so much good, Jack Abbott. And I'm going to make sure you see that, no matter how long it takes. You're stuck with me, brother."

"No one I'd rather be stuck with Robby."

End Notes

Thank you so much for reading, I hope you enjoyed your time here.

If the whim strikes you, please leave a comment and/or kudos. I am fueled by 50% comments, and 50% spite.

Have a beautiful day and take care of yourselves. Cut yourself some slack, you don't deserve to be so hard on yourself.

Happy pride everyone!

Please [drop by the Archive and comment](#) to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!